

City of Tuscaloosa

COUNCIL
BOBBY E. HOWARD
District 1
HARRISON TAYLOR
District 2
President Pro Tem
CYNTHIA LEE ALMOND
District 3



WALTER MADDOX
Mayor

COUNCIL
LEE GARRISON
District 4
KIP TYNER
District 5
BOB LUNDELL
District 6
WILLIAM TINKER
District 7

MEDIA NOTIFICATION
December 9, 2008

Heather McCollum
Office of the Mayor
205-248-5001

Tuscaloosa Lands the Blue Angels

Today, in Las Vegas, Nevada, the United States Navy announced that the Tuscaloosa Regional Airport has been selected to host the Blue Angels on April 4, 2009 and April 5, 2009. (Saturday and Sunday). Tuscaloosa was one of 36 sites selected from an application pool of over 300. It is expected that the Blue Angels' air show will draw tens of thousands of visitors and generate millions of new dollars into our regional economy.

Mayor Walter Maddox stated "Whether it is hosting the Olympic Triathlon Trials or the Blue Angels, we are chartering a new and exciting course in recruiting major events to Tuscaloosa. Tera Wyatt (TDOT Director) and Wayne Cameron (Airport Manager) are the real heroes in attracting America's premier air show to our community. During the summer budget hearings, Tera was determined that the City should pledge the necessary funding to apply for the Blue Angels' air show and then coordinated with the Tuscaloosa Convention and Visitors Bureau in the recruitment process. I commend Tera, Wayne and the TCVB for their vision and remarkable recruitment efforts. Further, without the enthusiastic support of the Tuscaloosa City Council, in particular, the early commitments of Council President Harrison Taylor and Councilman Lee Garrison (Finance Chairman), I doubt we would have been in a position to pursue this dynamic event in 2009. "

The City of Tuscaloosa's application was boosted by the financial and logistical commitments of the Tuscaloosa County Commission and the City of Northport. Mayor Maddox stated, "Judge Hardy McCollum and Mayor Bobby Herndon never hesitated in their support to land the Blue Angels for our community and that made an unbelievable impression to the Blue Angels. Our local economy is feeling the impact of the national recession; therefore, it is vital that we use regional tourism to help fill our hotels, restaurants and businesses. The Blue Angels will be an economic boost during a very

difficult time, and it will lift our spirits by providing us an opportunity to watch some of America's bravest men and women perform at the highest level."

Mayor Herndon stated, "The citizens of Northport are extremely excited about the opportunity to partner with the City of Tuscaloosa to host the Blue Angels. This event will bring thousands of people to our local business and restaurants."

Judge McCollum stated, "We are honored and pleased to be selected."

Robert Ratliff, Executive Director of the Convention and Visitors Bureau stated, "We are thrilled to be a small part of this enormous effort by The City of Tuscaloosa and their partnership with the City of Northport and Tuscaloosa County. Because of the vision of Wayne Cameron, Airport Manager and the determination of our TDOT director, Tera Wyatt, the Tuscaloosa Regional Airport air show in April 2009 is sure to be a fantastic event for not only the local citizens, but for us on the tourism side. We see this as a great marketing tool to large areas outside West Alabama. Our advertising budget already had this project in place, now we are ready to launch it."

In the coming months, the City of Tuscaloosa, Tuscaloosa County, City of Northport and the TCVB will be working together to provide the logistical and financial support to make the Blue Angels' air show a success.

For additional information contact Tera Wyatt at 349-0240.

###